

THE DICKENSIAN

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and Monthly Record of the Dickens Fellowship

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WHEN FOUND—

EVERY Dickensian will be delighted to learn that Swinburne's remarkable eulogy on Dickens, which appeared in the "Quarterly Review" for July, 1902, and which created so much attention at the time, is to be reprinted in book form, together with his introduction to an American edition of *Oliver Twist* which has not hitherto been available to readers in this country. The "Quarterly Review" article ran to about twenty pages, and was the first in that famous Review to bear the signature of its author.

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As a frontispiece to the present issue of the *Dickensian* we reproduce a photograph of a fine panel portrait of Charles Dickens which was specially executed to illustrate Mr. Crotch's new book. It is a striking example of the artistic workmanship of Mr. Francis Doyle-Jones, one of our rising young sculptors. Some few years ago Mr. Doyle-Jones left the north of England where he had already made for himself a reputation of no mean order and set himself up at Wentworth Studios, Manresa Road, Chelsea. It is here that the panel may be seen by any member of the Fellowship interested. We hope that the Dickens panel may be followed by a bust by Mr. Doyle-Jones at a later date, and if he achieves as great a success with this, as with the bust study of Robert Burns which he recently executed, then he will indeed have won a dual distinction.

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There is a copy of *David Copperfield* in the world to-day that must be worth to its owner almost its weight in gold, and we suggest that an effort should be made to secure it for the nation. It ought to be placed in the National Dickens Library at the Guildhall. We refer, of course, to the volume which went almost to the South Pole. When Lieut. Campbell's party was lost for six months, and lived in a hollowed-out snowdrift throughout the weary Antarctic winter, their only means of passing the time was by lectures—or rather, as one of the party says, heart to heart talks—and by reading. And they had only two books, *David Copperfield* and a "Life of R. L. Stevenson." Those two books ought to be national possessions, and a correspondent has suggested that the Dickens Fellowship should endeavour to secure the former for the Guildhall. He further suggests that if the book cannot be secured as a gift, then why should not the Fellowship raise a fund for its purchase, the money thus obtained being handed to the Scott Memorial Fund? It is an interesting suggestion. What do our readers think of it?

Sir Squire Bancroft is giving a recital of *A Christmas Carol* in aid of the Middlesex Hospital, in which H.S.H. Prince Alexander of Teck is greatly interested, at St. James's Theatre, on March 11th. Sir George Alexander has kindly lent his theatre for the purpose, and Mr. Henry F. Dickens, K.C., will preside. Prices of admission will be as usual.

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The closing of Southwark Bridge for reconstruction will naturally recall to our readers its Dickensian associations. It figures notably in *Little Dorrit* as the Iron Bridge to which Arthur Clennam invited Little Dorrit to go as an escape from the noise of the street. She afterwards became to prefer it for "a walk" better than anywhere else. It was on this bridge that she first saw Clennam and where young John Chivery declared his undying attachment to her. It was also doubtless very familiar to Charles Dickens during his youthful days when living in Lant Street.

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The Newsvendors' Benevolent and Provident Institution of which Dickens was twice President, is establishing a series of pensions in grateful memory of the permanent influence he bestowed upon the newsvendors by his exertions and interest. There are to be four candidates recommended for election to pensions without involving them in the distress incidental to a ballot of votes.

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We have received a copy of the Programme and Souvenir of the Dickens Pageant and Dance, held by the Hull Branch on 7th February last, and a very distinguished programme it is. The pictorial embellishments, printed in colours and black and white, were especially designed by Mr. H. H. Elsom, the prologue and chorus were specially written by Miss Eleanor Watson, whilst the overture, march, and other music were composed for the occasion by Miss Gertrude Watson, L.R.A.M. We understand that a few copies still remain for sale of the Souvenir and may be had of the Secretary, price sixpence each.

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When Eastgate House, Rochester, was opened as the city's museum a room was set apart especially for items of Dickensian interest and christened the Dickens room. To it Mr. Percy Fitzgerald contributed a number of valuable and interesting memorials in the shape of pictures, portraits, play-bills, etc. He has now presented it with a collection of nearly two hundred books associated with the novelist, comprising various editions of the works, including early American ones, commentaries, biographies, a copy of the Van Dieman's Land edition of *Pickwick*, a copy of the same book printed for the blind, and several other unique and curious volumes. Rochester is to be congratulated on its good fortune and Mr. Fitzgerald on his great generosity.

THE EDITOR.

A BLOOM OF SCARLET GERANIUM

A BIRTHDAY TRIBUTE

By the Rev. W. A. C. CHEVALIER

IT was in the Abbey House in the Broadway of the most ancient city of Winton, facing the colossal statue of Alfred the Great, who once kept his court there. It stood in a flower pot on a small table, beside a bright fire in a large comfortable room, with high windows looking out on the great statue. The room was well furnished with guests, there being some fifty or sixty citizens of the old city, of both sexes, gathered together. It was a special and unique occasion, even for Winton, and yet one in which the citizens delighted.

The object of the meeting was an intellectual one—it was a literary matinee, and the bloom of scarlet geranium gave colour to it, and indicated its character. It was “Dickensian,” with a specific purpose, and that purpose was the formation of a branch of the Dickens Fellowship in the old city. A real Canon of the Cathedral occupied the chair, as was fitting, not a minor Canon, but a full fledged dignitary—member of the Chapter and resident of The Close. He stood behind the little table with the scarlet geranium in front of him, and it was not, therefore, surprising that he should be redolent of the bright flower’s odour. In fact, like others in that select assembly, he was a Dickensian, and his chief function was to introduce and pave the way for another lover of Dickens, who had come as a delegate of the Fellowship to help in the formation of a branch of it in that ancient Capital. This delegate was one who had known the great Victorian Novelist in the flesh, and his reminiscences dated back more than half a century—to the early fifties. The bloom of scarlet geranium looked very bright and fresh as he stepped in front of the table, and it may have inspired the speaker and influenced the audience with something of the Dickensian spirit—for aught I can tell—but certainly there was a sort of magnetic attraction between them. Be that as it may, visions of the past began to arise and transported them from the Abbey House, and the present, to other scenes and times, in all of which the spirit of Charles Dickens held potent sway as author, reader, speaker, actor, and philanthropist, and stirred their deepest sympathies in all these relations.

If it had been in Dickens’s own “Cloisterham,” the effect could scarcely have been more in the spirit of the Master. The visions conjured up by the speaker’s reminiscences ranged over varied acts and scenes. Now, it was in the crowded hall where the great author stood before an immense audience as reader of one of his own works—the *Carol*, in which he was at his best. The quickness, variety and finish of his assumptions of the different characters in that prose idyl, electrified the audience and held them spell-bound. And when at last the climax came, and the boy with the big turkey, “as big as Tiny Tim,” appeared outside Scrooge’s window on Christmas morning, and the old miser, transformed into a genial, generous, Christmas-loving man, screamed out the order to take it to Bob Cratchit as a

surprise—the enthusiasm of the enraptured audience knew no bounds, and there was an ovation before which the reader bows and retires.

Now the scene changes—it is on the boards of a famous London theatre, at the end of the fifties, where a great actor with a world-known name has produced a revival of “The Merchant of Venice.” It is a great meeting to inaugurate a scheme for the formation of a Dramatic college. The theatre is filled with all that is best and greatest in the literary and artistic world. The great actor presides, but the chief speaker is the world-honoured penman who wears in his button-hole a sprig of scarlet geranium. His is the speech of the occasion. He is in the right vein and makes characteristic allusion to the place in which they are assembled. “I know that a few hours hence, the Grand Canal of Venice will flow with picturesque fidelity on the very spot on which I now stand dryshod, and that ‘the quality of mercy’ will be beautifully set forth to the Venetian Senate, by a learned young doctor of Padua; and knowing this, it came into my mind to consider how different the real bond of to-day from the ideal bond of to-night—now, all generosity and forbearance, then, all selfishness, malignity and revenge.”

And now again, it is in the little theatre of Tavistock House, the occasion of a performance of rare Ben Jonson’s comedy, “Every Man in his Humour,” by the members of that notable company of amateur players which, as a contemporary chronicler expressed it, comprised “the wit and genius of the age,” and of which Charles Dickens was the leader and chief. The cast of the play was a remarkable one, including the editor and several of the staff of *Punch*, two or three Royal Academicians, an eminent Q.C., afterwards a judge, a brother of the novelist, and his friend and biographer—a very galaxy of stars, of which the “Inimitable” who played Captain Bobadil-Braggadocio, was “the bright particular star.” What wonderful versatility, how many sided, a Proteus of a man, excellent in all these arts—the Master! No wonder that he was popular, nay, more that he was beloved. “I would rather,” said he—and his voice comes across the years to-day, “that my children coming after me trudged in the mud, and knew from the general feeling of society that their father was beloved, than I would that they rode in their carriages, and knew from their banker’s book, that he was rich.” That was the secret of it—his large human sympathy, his charity, and his strong moral sense.

Anon the scene changes once more. It is in the Confessor’s Abbey Church at Westminster, in Poet’s Corner, with the shades of Johnson, Garrick and Cumberland—Shakespeare is not far off—and near the hallowed shrine of the great master of humour and pathos, the creator of Pickwick and little Nell. A mocking laugh comes from a neighbouring spot, an echo of despair, “Life is a jest, and all things show it, I thought so once, but now I know it.” A melancholy jest indeed—irreverent, sad, pitiful. Alas, poor Gay! What a contrast to the earnest faith and cheerful optimism of our own Dickens who always felt and set forth in his works the truth that rings out in Longfellow’s noble lines, “Life is real, life is earnest, and the grave is not its goal.”

But religious was he? Aye, religious in the true sense of it, in the faith that binds to God—religious without the 'isms, making melody in his heart to the Lord, singing spiritual songs in his beautiful prose idyls to the glory of God, and to the great joy and comfort of His people. A great week-day preacher too, was he, and touched more hearts and ameliorated more lives than many pulpits, because he preached the Gospel in its practical simplicity, after the example of the Great Master, with very little human theology and no higher criticism, for the Master's interpretation was high enough for him. Religious? Who but a religious man would have written a paraphrase of the Gospel in simple language for his little children, to familiarize them with the great original at an age when it would otherwise have been a mystery to them? Who but a religious man would have written to his son on leaving home, "Never abandon the practice of saying your own private prayers, night and morning. I have never abandoned it myself, and I know the comfort of it." Dickens wrote and spoke of eternal truths as great realities, in which he believed with all his heart, though he did not accept man's interpretation of them. How those eternal verities must have possessed his soul on "that brilliant morning which arose with the ever memorable 8th of June, shining on the old city of Rochester." He sees in surpassing beauty, with the lusty ivy gleaming in the sun, and the rich trees waving in the balmy air, its antiquities and its ruins, its cathedral and its castle. But his fancy then is not with the stern dead forms of either of these, but with that which warms "the cold stone tombs of centuries, and lights them up with flecks of brightness fluttering there like wings." To him on that sunny summer morning, "the changes of glorious lights from moving boughs, the songs of birds, the scents from garden, woods and fields have penetrated into the old Cathedral, have subdued its earthly odour, and are preaching the Resurrection and the Life."

As this last vision fades—ere it quite passes—there pours into the windows of the Abbey House, a sudden ray of the setting sun, making a momentary glory round the heads of those near the little table, and it seemed to the speaker's fancy that on the flat stone in Poet's Corner of the old Minster which enshrines the Master's name, there shone a gleam of warm light wherein there lay a bloom of scarlet geranium, his favourite flower, a tribute of love to his immortal memory.

BRANSBY WILLIAMS'S DICKENS SKETCHES

ADMIRERS of Mr. Bransby Williams will welcome the little book he has just issued containing a selection from his famous sketches from Dickens. It is published by Messrs. Chapman and Hall, at the price of one shilling net. It does not contain all his Dickens sketches, but the majority of the most popular ones are there, and the selection is a good one. His clever "Sydney Carton," "Scrooge," and "Fagin" monologues are included, and the character sketches are Squeers, Uriah Heep, Wilkins Micawber, Bill Sikes, Captain Cuttle, Mr. Mantalini, Mrs. Gamp, and Grandfather Trent. Three of these—

Mr. Mantalini, Captain Cuttle, and Mrs. Gamp—will be none the less welcome because they are comparatively unfamiliar. Stage directions are given fully, so that the aspiring rivals to Mr. Williams—and their name is legion!—will find the book very useful indeed. Dickensians must, of course, possess it. One hopes that a supplementary volume, containing the remaining sketches, may see the light ere long.

C. W.

IN FRANCE WITH CHARLES DICKENS

By F. ASHFORD WHITE

II.

TURNING riverwards and following the Seine, another souvenir is revived by the sight of the Morgue, open to all, as in Dickens's day, until a few years ago, but now closed and deserted. Hither, the novelist assures us he was "dragged by invisible forces" whenever he visited Paris. In the grim winter of 1846-7, the aged white-haired victim of the river seemed to him an impersonation of the snowy season; during the sultry summer evenings the figure of the "large dark man" persistently haunted the vivid imagination, but he could never cure himself of the morbid curiosity which prompted every passer-by to lounge through the dismal corridor.

The opening of the railway as far as Amiens considerably facilitated communications between London and Paris. Forster and Dickens had only to drive from Amiens to the coast or *vice versa*. For several years, therefore, the latter contented himself with flying but fairly frequent visits to the French capital. In July 1850 he witnessed "the mighty hullabaloo at the theatre when Brutus (the play was 'Lucretia') declaimed about Liberty;" and some eighteen months later a letter dated from the Hotel Wagram (decidedly, there is hardly an existing establishment opposite the Tuileries gardens that has not Dickensian associations) tells Mrs. Dickens that her husband has dined with d'Orsay, had a pleasant walk with Leech outside Paris, and intends to finish the day at Frederick Lemaître's theatre.

Then came the summer visits to Boulogne which Dickens so thoroughly enjoyed. His directions to his friend Frank Stone (R.A.) who is about to pay him a visit, give an amusing picture of the scene on the arrival of the steam-packet half-a-century ago.

"You will be filtered with the rest of the passengers through a hideous white-washed quarantine looking Custom-house, where a stern man of military aspect will demand your passport." After instructing his friend to merely show his (Dickens's) address, the novelist warns him—"You will then be passed out at a little door, like one of the ill-starred prisoners on the bloody September night, into a yelling shrieking crowd, cleaving the air with the names of the different hotels, exactly seven thousand six hundred and fifty four in number. Your heart will be on the point of sinking with dread, then you will find yourself in the arms of the Sparkler of Albion."

This last nickname is not "all too presumptuous folly." Dickens

was now a prominent figure in English life. It was about this epoch that he was crossing the Channel via Calais, and the fact of his being on board was telegraphed to Dover. The Dover authorities accordingly stopped the London train till the boat arrived "rather to the exasperation of the British public," the novelist drily adds.

His eldest son Charles was completing his education at Leipsic but was to come home for the Christmas holidays. Dickens accordingly took the opportunity of going as far as Paris to meet him, and (he tells us) "found my son Charles hot,—or I should rather say cold,—from Germany, with his arms and legs so grown out of his coat and trousers that I was ashamed of him, and was reduced to the necessity of taking him under cover of the night to a ready-made establishment in the Palais Royal, where they put him into balloon-waisted pantaloons and increased my confusion.

Twelve months after he writes to his friend M. Regnier that he is anxious to run over to Paris for a week but "doesn't want to go to the Hotel Brighton" as he wishes to be free to dine out every day. This winter visit, with evenings at the leading theatres, had become almost a habit with the novelist.

But in 1855—the great Exhibition year—Dickens decided on a

special visit with all his family. He had considerable difficulty in obtaining a suitable residence, on account of the crowded state of the city, but finally secured two "apartments" (flats) for six months at £28 per month. The "front rooms look out on the Champs Elysees," and the flat is "just above Franconi's famous circus and within a door or two of the Jardin d'Hiver." The Exhibition itself is but a few hundred yards further down the Avenue. The old Rue de Courcelles house was no great distance away. In fact, Dickens had tried hard to find a house in the "new region" around the Rue Lord Byron, and refers



CHARLES DICKENS LEAVING THE MORGUE

Drawn by G. J. Pinwell

in a letter to "that home in the Rue de Balzac which is to be subject of more lawsuits between the man who let it to me and the man who wouldn't let me have it than any other house that was ever built."

These six months at 49 Champs Elysees mark the final scene of one act of Dickens's life. In March, 1856—about the time his Parisian lease expired—he bought Gad's Hill, the residence of his later years. In April he gave the first of his public readings from which Forster and others afterwards so strongly dissuaded him as an undue strain on his physical powers.

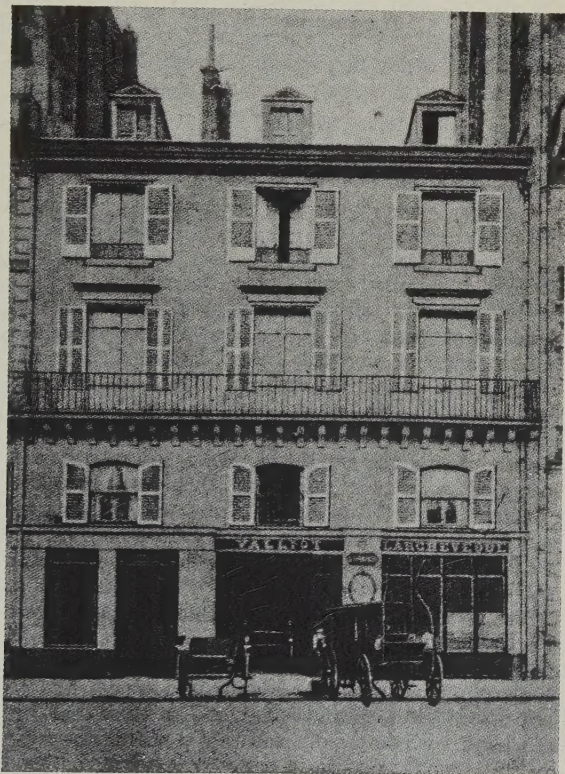
But at Paris he was still the head of a professionally united family, the great writer pure and simple, the resident of the mighty British capital immortalized in his numerous novels. He was now well known abroad by translations; and English visitors and French residents vied in doing him honour. The Crimean war had just terminated; the "entente cordiale" was at its apogee. In Paris Dickens met Landseer and Leslie, Robert Lytton and the Brownings. Thackeray called; a "snug bedroom" was reserved for W. C. Macready, and Wilkie Collins constantly dropped in from his bachelor den just down the Avenue. Dickens was the principal guest at a magnificent banquet organised by Emile de Girardin, and also dined at Scribe's. Here he met Auber, who recounted his experiences in London—he had studied English, he explained to Dickens, at "Stock Noontoon." At Madame Viardot's (Malibran's sister's) the novelist met George Sand; and at M. Pichot's he chatted with Lamartine of Richardson's novels and Defoe's works. Paris was at its gayest, the King of Sardinia visited the Emperor towards the end of 1855, there were illuminations and fetes in honour of the return of the Zouaves—the men who stormed the Malakoff; and the usual New Year's Fair on the boulevards was another feature of this visit described in Dickens's letters in his usual racy style. Great street improvements had been made under the direction of Haussmann; the theatres were in full swing, and the city full of foreigners.

This visit terminated, the younger children went to Boulogne for the summer, and Dickens—who had of course made frequent cross-Channel journeys to the "Household Words" office during his Parisian residence—spent some time at his favourite French watering place, and was there when the Prince Consort paid his visit to the Emperor. Two of his sons were there a year or two later.

The publication of the *Tale of Two Cities* in 1859, and the *Uncommercial Traveller* in 1860, gave the English public the fruits of Dickens's study of French life and history. Henceforth his visits to Paris were handicapped by his now perpetual "readings." He went over for some weeks in December, 1862; re-crossing "the Channel all bestrewn with floating wreck just after a gale (in a steamer with a hundred and fifty sick schoolboys from Calais on board)" to spend Christmas in England. He was back again (this time at the Hotel du Helder) in January, and found Paris "generally about as wicked and extravagant as in the days of the Regency." He gave a reading at the British Embassy, and went to see "Faust" at the Opera;—"a splendid

work, in which that noble and sad story is most nobly and sadly rendered, and perfectly delighted me," he writes,—concluding with the remark that Gounod, the composer, "must be a very remarkable man indeed." * Posterity has endorsed his verdict on the work, still the most popular of all operas in France.

Dickens's last visit to Paris was in autumn, during the tropical September of 1865. He assures us that "the man who sells tisane on



49 AVENUE DES CHAMPS ELYSÉES, PARIS

Where Dickens resided 1854-5.

the Boulevards can't keep the flies out of his glasses ; " and the novelist suffered from the effects of a slight sunstroke. In 1868 came the second American trip with its fatigues and its triumphs, two years later he had found his last resting place in Poets' Corner.

Dickens's connection with Paris thus extended over twenty eventful years. He knew France as a Constitutional Monarchy, as a Republic, and as an Empire. He was spared the sight of her humiliation in 1871,

he saw her too long after the invasion of 1815 to hear an echo of the "hereditary enmity." Scanty in his sympathy with her rulers (to Louis Philippe and Napoleon III. alike his allusions are slightly contemptuous), his liking for the nation's qualities seems to have been hearty and sincere, and is evinced in every phrase of his shorter papers. His one "foreign" novel is located in France. The years between 1844 and 1856, when he spent his longest holidays on French soil, represent alike a period of prosperity and prestige for France, and the most attractive and remarkable epoch of his own life: and his charming sketches of the capital and the provinces make all Anglo-Parisians sincerely regret that he left no complete novel of that contemporary French life which he so thoroughly knew and appreciated.

[Concluded]

DICKENS AS A SOCIAL REFORMER*

MR. CROTCH'S BRILLIANT BOOK

By J. W. T. LEY.

MR. CROTCH is a very enthusiastic Dickensian, but I do not think the most cynical critic could find fault with this book. It is a brilliant bit of work. No better book on any phase of Dickens has been published for a long time. And I do not think it possible for anyone to dispute any of his findings. He does not seek to hide his own views on various social problems, and no doubt he will have many readers who do not share those views, but even they will not be likely to attempt to argue against his findings in regard to Dickens's views. George Gissing once said that Dickens was never in his intentions democratic. It was a silly thing to say even before the *Miscellaneous Papers* were published, but if it still needed refutation Mr. Crotch has done the needful. He could have done it without the help of the *Miscellaneous Papers*; with their help the utter absurdity of the statement is demonstrated as conclusively as anything ever was or will be demonstrated.

It was because he was a democrat, because he believed that the people should rule, that Dickens never ceased to demand that they should be educated. He realized their rights, he knew that "ignorance goes hand in hand with forms of baseness," and he knew the danger that lay in the possibility of the people realizing their strength and demanding their rights before they were prepared for the proper exercise of power. "The poor require a deal of beating out of shape before their human shape is gone. Even in their frantic wickedness there may be good in their hearts triumphantly asserting itself. . . . The truth is trustfulness in them, not doubt, nor putting down, nor filing them away." To say that the man who wrote that was not a democrat is merely to talk nonsense.

* "Charles Dickens, Social Reformer: The Social Teachings of England's Great Novelist," by W. Walter Crotch. London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd. 7s. 6d. net.

But was Dickens a social reformer? Who can have any hesitation in answering "Yes"? He had no educational curriculum to lay before the nation; he had no plans for workmen's dwellings or for garden cities to submit for adoption; he had no cut and dried scheme of Poor Law or common law or criminal law reform to advocate; but he knew that ignorance was abroad in the land, naked and unashamed, and that of all social pests ignorance is the greatest; he knew that the mass of the people lived—nay, existed—in insanitary dwellings, where health was impossible for mind and body; he knew that the Poor Law system was uncharitable; he knew that our common law was unjust; he knew that our criminal law was based upon repression and vengeance. He knew that all this was bad, and from his earliest days of authorship till the end of his life his voice was ever raised demanding reform. He was no rabid unpractical Syndicalist. He was truly a mediator. He had no sympathy with any man who would set class against class, but he knew that the masses suffered under injustice and repression, and he knew that the truth was trustfulness in them.

This is Mr. Crotch's view, and I cannot conceive that anyone can differ from him. As he says, Dickens taught that all men are children of a common mother; equal in their relations to the common feelings and duties of the race; and the man who, in the mid-Victorian period could drive that truth home—as Dickens assuredly did—was a social reformer of the kind that will bring about more real reform than all the Sidney Webbs that this old world shall ever produce.

"I believe that virtue shows quite as well in rags and patches as she does in purple and fine linen. I believe that she and every beautiful object in external nature claims some sympathy in the breast of the poorest man who breaks his scanty loaf of daily bread." He knew it. He had lived among "the people"; he had learned to respect and to love them, and when great influence came to him he was true to his trust, and never failed to use it in their behalf. There was no bitterness in the man—except when he was face to face with deliberate humbug and cruelty—he sought to reconcile man to man. It was a noble task, and he met with an incalculable measure of success. "These people are worth thinking about," he said, in effect, "See them in their wretched 'homes,' see their wretched 'bringing-up,' see their lack of education, and the lack of incentive to live decent and honest lives. Yet see how charity and sympathy dwell in their hearts; see how virtue is with them still. Are they not worth considering? Is it not worth the nation's while to turn such material into a useful channel? Give these people decent homes; give them a decent education; cause life to mean to them something better than drudgery and starvation and disease, and what grand stuff you have here, my lords, ladies, and gentlemen!" This is what he wrote in every novel—wrote so that he who runs may read. Truly we may say with Gissing: "Is it any wonder that the common people love him?"

This is Mr. Crotch's point:—"So that whilst Dickens was not the exponent of any particular theory of general constructive reform;

whilst his teaching was limited to emphasizing the necessity for better sanitation and housing and education, and denouncing the evils of landlordism, the Poor Law, the prison system, gambling, usury, war, slavery, child-labour, sweating, and other particular social defects, he yet became the prose-prophet of social reform itself, and the grim upholder of that which alone is the assurance of ultimate success, namely, our equality in the primary and fundamental instincts of faith and love and duty." And our author shows how Dickens fought the battle for the children (how he was the first who introduced child characters into fiction); how he was a pioneer in the demand for popular education—a demand which was responded to in the year of his death; how he was foremost among reformers who insisted upon the need for better housing and efficient sanitation; how he was the champion of the people's pleasures; how he was persistently on the side of Parliamentary reform; how he fought for Poor Law and prison reform; and how, last, but very far from least, he was ever a prophet of sane patriotism. One would like to quote, but even if space were at one's disposal it would not be possible thus to do justice to this book. A feature of the work is its demonstration of the immense value of those fugitive papers which were so recently brought to light. In these we have Dickens speaking his own considered views, freed from what, after all, are the trammels of fiction, and at the very least they prove—if proof were needed—the absolute sincerity of the novels. Without them such a book as this would have been impossible. As it is, Mr. Crotch has produced a work which I venture to prophesy will be a classic among Dickensian literature.

I have only one quarrel with the author. It is a small matter, perhaps—just a matter of taste—but I do not like to see any man written of as "The Master" with a capital M.

POETICAL TRIBUTES TO CHARLES DICKENS

XCIX

DICKENS AND LITTLE PAUL

By ERNEST E. POLACK

There was but one small chapter more to write, in which he and his little friend were to part company for ever; and the greater part of the night of the day on which it was written, Thursday, the 14th, he was wandering desolate and sad about the streets of Paris.—Forster's "Life of Dickens."

A LONG the Paris streets he wanders,
Thinking, with a cheerless heart,
On the child of his creation,
Child of his imagination,
Creature of his matchless art.

Many a loving voice must falter,
Many a silent tear must fall,
When the fatal words, betraying
What the waves had all been saying,
Tell the death of Little Paul.

But he alone had framed the story,
 He alone had known the end ;
 He, who, wrapt in silent sorrow,
 Roams, until the dawn of morrow,
 Grieving for his little friend.

Who but he had known him always,
 Known his sorrow, felt his joy ?
 Who but he had heard him sighing—
 Filled with gratitude undying,
 Whisper, " How I love you, Floy ! " ?

He alone, unseen, had lingered
 Oft beside that silent bed ;
 Oft, invisible, had waited
 Where the child by him created—
 Child who ne'er had lived—lay dead !

Who shall tell the nameless sorrow
 Hidden in an author's breast,
 When a child, by Fate's decision,
 Fading from his fevered vision,
 Seeks the mystic land of rest ?

WILLIAM STERLING BATTIS AMERICA'S DICKENS ACTOR

By EDWARD A. OTT

[Mr. William Sterling Battis is doing for Dickens in America, what Mr. Bransby Williams has done for the novelist in England. In *The Platform*, the Chicago Newspaper, an appreciative article on Mr. Battis's work appeared recently and the following extract, we are sure, will interest our readers.—ED.]

MR. BATTIS knew the stage from an earlier experience. He made his debut at the old McVicker's theatre in Chicago, on the back of Joseph Jefferson in "Rip Van Winkle," later playing with Clara Morris and James O'Neil in "Article 47." His stage experience covered a wide field. He received his first inspiration for dramatic reading from Alfred P. Burbank, principal of the Old Dearborn School, and who later became one of the most popular readers in the country.

His early training and strenuous experiences have developed a masterful stage presence, and a very remarkable voice of great range, perfect in its flexibility, carrying power and quality. He is in absolute control of this power to express his every emotion ; every shade of thought is in perfect sympathetic obedience to his will.

And how necessary all the past had been ! During all these varied experiences his leisure hours were spent playing with and loving the Dickens children. His friends knew he was a good reader—a strong actor—a loyal friend—the most loyal one could have.

Mr. Battis must have had a rugged boyhood or his splendid energy would not now form the basis of his professional power. I like to think

of him reared in some old-fashioned mansion with mystic halls and cupboards and secret doorways. There must have been some early opportunity, for the deep dramatic impulses led him from the first. Later he found his way to the Boston School of Expression, where, under the guiding genius of Dr. Curry, his imagination learned control. He was learning poise. He not only stayed to graduate, but to teach. Here he learned to master his dreams and put them into art form—he learned the processes by which imagination weaves the fabrics of emotion into finished art forms. He taught, and in the endless detail work developed his own best powers; in listening to and training the voices of others, he lost the limitation of one voice, and found fifty. He lost the limitation of one mind, one set of gestures, and became cosmopolitan in mind and action. His body was now ready, but the agony of creation had not yet come—nor its joy.

In the chair of rhetoric at Colby University he widened his vision of literature and saw the need of students for a more concrete help in interpretation. He saw, with sympathy, how few can read well without help. A longing to help others see as he could see drove him to the stage, and in an effort to make them see, with the

help of scenery and associates, he served his stage apprenticeship.

Across the Western ocean, thousands of miles from Gadshill, a human heart was touched by the Dickens genius. William Sterling Battis has learned the art of reincarnation, and the Dickens children are saved to the lyceum. And how? By the same mental processes that first gave Little Dorrit and Rose Maylie and David Copperfield to humanity—concentration and appreciation.

We Americans are not noted for our appreciation. We are creative and critical iconoclasts. We are not hero worshippers—our sacred traditions are of revolution but Mr. Battis escaped the national malady. Perhaps his imagination saved him—I think it was his heart. He



loved Charles Dickens and his whole family of literary children. He loved them long and ardently, played with them, suffered with them, and unconsciously was being prepared for the strange hour of reincarnation which is now his art and profession.

Of course all these years a restless indefinite longing kept Battis far from being happy. He had not found himself in the schoolroom! he was out of atmosphere on the stage; his heart wanted the universality of the lyceum, the same good people it gathers for serious purposes. He wanted to help, to teach and entertain. To do that he needed this special audience. The agony, time and opportunity came. It was a period of creative enthusiasm. He worked alone as artists ever must, he dramatised the books of his favourite author and found his form of expression—and then came the light. The world lost Battis and found the Dickens children re-born—brought to life with voice, dialect, manners, costumes, colour, facial expression. Mr. Battis did not bring Dickens's characters well acted, or Dickens's lines well read; he had learned his art—something beautiful had taken place in this devotee. Others learn to read or act or dress well; what happened in Battis was a reward. There isn't a man who knows Charles Dickens better than this Dickens specialist knows him. He has proved his discipleship by reincarnating all the children. He has his reward in concentration. He talks and looks and acts Dickensian characters.

I think and hope William Sterling Battis is lost, irrevocably lost in his art, for now there remains to delight and inspire and reveal the deep sympathy and love and tenderness of Charles Dickens, this Dickens specialist—this most valuable lyceum artist—The Reincarnationist.

THE BOZ CLUB

ON February 7th the annual gathering of the Boz Club was held at the Whitehall Rooms, Hotel Metropole, over which the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell presided.

Mr. RUSSELL described Dickens as one of the best friends life had afforded in the best and the darkest hours. He spoke of Dickens's genius, which was many-sided—great in fiction, great in drama, great in horror and tragedy—but he was the greatest humorist that ever lived. His glorious mirth would live for ever in the hearts of men. Dickens, Mr. Russell declared, was not only the greatest, but also the purest humorist who ever wrote. In his writings they had the most convincing proof that it was possible to move old and young to inextinguishable laughter without the use of a single expression which would defile the purest or shock the most sensitive. No human being ever was the worse for reading Dickens, and thousands had been the better, for there was something contagious and inspiring in his zeal against oppression, cruelty, meanness, and wrong, in his joy of living, his love of Nature, and the open air, and the youth and bloom of this delightful world.

Mr. PETT RIDGE and Mr. H. F. DICKENS also spoke.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

THE POLES AND THE RATCATCHER'S DAUGHTER

SIR,—In reply to your query anent the quotation, "*A smooth male and female Pole of high rank are coming at the observer with their arms akimbo*," I may say that I personally perfectly remember the illustration. It was a brightly coloured print and formed an attractive frontispiece to the original *Polka*—then all the rage—as published by Messrs. Leader and Cock. These publishers, our next door neighbours, at the Brook Street corner of Bond Street, were our sole and only musical providers. Date about 1846.

Yours, F. C. BURNAND.

THE MYSTERY OF EDWIN DROOD

SIR,—The interesting letter of Mr. J. C. L. Clark prompts many reflections concerning Dickens's last literary gen.

Mr. Clark says:—"Isn't the explanation of Dickens's reply to Miss Hogarth's question: 'I hope you haven't really killed Edwin Drood?' : 'I call my book the *Mystery*, not the *History* of Edwin Drood,' that Edwin's fate was, after all, not the great thing, nor Edwin himself the character, upon whom he wished the reader's attention centred? In other words, that 'poor Eddie' was not much more than a vehicle for the development of the title?" Surely these remarks betray some confusion of thought.

Dickens used the words "*Mystery*" and "*History*" as direct antitheses. He meant by "*Mystery*" that he was writing a book of fiction, with climax and anticlimax, and related nominal and virtual solutions. It is through relying so much on what is really the "*History*" basis that so many critics have fallen into diversified error. Indeed, it is the fashion of some writers to drop the word "*Mystery*" altogether from the title of their works dealing with Dickens's half-finished novel.

Mr. Clark would have stated the case more fairly for himself and for the constructional idea of the book if he had said that Dickens did wish the reader's attention "centred" on Edwin, but not wholly so.

Critics generally have overlooked the fact that Dickens meant Edwin and Rosa each to take pivotal, that is central, rank. Had he been a less ingenious author he would have entitled his work, "*The Love Test, or the Mystery of Edwin Drood*." Either part of the title can be used as a covering one, but not strictly as a mere sub-title.

If Mr. Clark will pursue the subject on this suggested line of thought he will, I am sure, find relief ultimately in the logical belief that it was intended Edwin Drood should return alive to his friends, and that, in accordance with the true Dickensian spirit, he was meant to be wedded to patient Rosa, whose love had been so severely tested.

Dickens, the beloved, it is well known, had an intense love of method and order. The expression of his detestation of sloppiness in any of the departments of life was delightfully keen throughout his works.

Why attempt, then, to degrade him to the level of a tenth-rate novelist?

Yours faithfully, HENRY WOOLLEN.

112 Coldershaw Road, West Ealing, W.,
Dickens Day, 7th February, 1913.

THE ORIGIN OF SAM WELLER

SIR,—I note with interest that in a privately printed autobiography of Mr. Louis Sterne, the engineer and inventor, that he was a close friend of Charles Dickens. Mr. Sterne relates how Dickens came to adopt the name of Sam Weller in *Pickwick Papers*.

"Mr. Weller was a merchant in the City of London. He was a gentleman highly respected, and was most popular with all who knew him. He was generally known as 'Sammy, my boy,' by most of his intimate friends." He was grandfather to Lady Butler, the artist. Dickens made Mr. Weller's acquaintance at a dinner given by Forster at the Cock Tavern.

"There was considerable hilarity at the opposite end of the table," writes Mr. Sterne, "and Dickens's attention was drawn to the popularity of Mr. Weller. He asked for an introduction, asked him if he would object to having his name used in a sketch which was then in manuscript, and which was afterwards known as the *Pickwick Papers*."

In Mr. Edwin Pugh's recent publication, "The Dickens Originals," the author gives us a portrait of Sam Vale, a comedian acting at the Surrey Theatre presumably about 1830, from whom it is claimed the name "Weller" was suggested. Mr. Pugh, however, does not attach much credence to this, but rather conjectures that the name was taken from a nurse called Mary Weller once in the service of the Dickens family.

On reference to John Forster's Life of Charles Dickens, Chapter V., this sentence occurs—"Here were the only two leading incidents of his own life before I knew him, his marriage and the first appearance of Mr. Pickwick."

In view of this statement, one would like to ascertain from Mr. Sterne how Dickens attended a dinner given by Forster before he knew him. It would no doubt interest Dickensians if the authorities on Dickens would enlighten us further on this matter.

Yours in fellowship,

Chiswick, 15th February, 1913.

P. H. ELLIS.

[Owing to pressure on our space this month several interesting letters are held over for our next issue.—EDITOR.]

THE DICKENS FELLOWSHIP

HERE, THERE, AND EVERYWHERE

BIRMINGHAM.—A very crowded meeting was held on 24th January in the Great Western Hotel. The chair was taken by the Lord Mayor of the city, and a brilliantly-clever paper, entitled "The Views of Bernard Shaw compared with those of Charles Dickens," was read by Dr. T. Sidney Short. It was very refreshing to get out of, for even a short time, the groove of hero-worship and to hear other views of Dickens and his work from an independent speaker who had decided opinions of his own on both authors. Mr. W. T. Hussey contributed a Recital in his usual style on 7th February. Mr. Howard S. Pearson gave a very delightful and decidedly original paper on "David Copperfield," showing how impossible it is for an author to get away from himself and his circumstances in the writing of a book.

On February 21st, Mr. Cuming Walters gave his Lecture on "The Influence of Travel on Dickens's Novels."

BRIGHTON.—The celebration of Dickens's birthday took the form of a dramatic recital arranged by Miss Alice Halsey and Mr. Francis J. Gauntlett, given at Steine House, Old Steine, on 7th February. The evening opened with a recital of chapter xlv. from *David Copperfield*, in which Clarissa Spenlow and Lavinia Spenlow interview David with respect to his engagement to their niece Dora. The characters were satisfactorily sustained by Miss Russell Davies (Clarissa), Miss Mabel Beach (Lavinia), Mr. Robert Buckland (Traddles), and Mr. Cyril Foster (David). An excerpt from *Martin Chuzzlewit* (chapter xlv.) was very effectively presented, the most noteworthy impersonations being Miss Dorothy Davis's Mrs. Gamp, Mr. Francis J. Gauntlett's Jonas Chuzzlewit, Miss Russell Davies's Charity Pecksniff, and Miss Alice Haile's Mercy Chuzzlewit. In the recital of chapter iv. from *The Old Curiosity Shop* Mr. Francis J. Gauntlett distinguished himself with a clever embodiment of the ungainly Quilp, Miss Russell Davies was well suited as Mrs. Jiniwin, and Miss Mabel Beach made a submissive Mrs. Quilp. The greatest success of the evening was achieved in the recital of chapter xlii. from *Nicholas Nickleby*. Mr. Wilfred Davey, who submitted a very fine character study as John Browdie, was delightfully entertaining, Miss Alice Haile was thoroughly realistic as Fanny Squeers, Mr. Francis J. Gauntlett gave a forcible enactment of Squeers, and able support was rendered by Miss Alice Cook (Mrs. Browdie), Mr. Cyril Foster (Nicholas Nickleby), and Master Norman Halsey (Wackford Squeers). The recitals were appropriately dressed, and at the close the leading artistes, with Miss Alice Halsey, were warmly called to the front. During the evening pleasing variety was afforded by songs contributed by Madame Laura Withy and Mr. Arthur Denyer.

BRISTOL.—The "Birthday" Dinner was a great success. Over seventy sat down, and the President of the Branch presided. Mr. Laurie Magnus submitted the toast of "The Immortal Memory" in a splendid speech, in which he expressed his gratitude to those who were responsible for the great honour done him in electing him as one of the Vice-Presidents of the Branch. Other speakers were Messrs. J. Baker, F.R.G.S., E. G. Tyrrell, B.A., J. T. Francombe, M.A., F. J. Giddings, H. C. Smith, Mrs. Tonkin, and the Secretary, Mr. Sam Tucker. Recitals were given by Mr. C. Andrews and Mr. Douglas Bird, solos by Miss Rose Budd, Miss M. Elles, Mr. Lionel Venn, Mr. Wyndham Shipp, and a most enjoyable evening was brought to a close by the singing of "Auld Lang Syne." On 19th February the usual monthly meeting was held, the programme upon this occasion having been arranged by the ladies of the Committee. The following sketches were given in character — "Mrs. Gamp interviews Mr. Mold," "Mrs. Richards tells Floy a Story," "Edith Dombey meets Carker at Dijon," "Mrs. Pardiggle on the Warpath, and visits the Brick-maker's Cottage," "A Mistaken Proposal." A paper by Mrs. Parsons on "A Day in Dickens Land" was also read, the following taking part — Mesdames Collis, Orchard, Long, Tonkin, Brown, and Giddings; Misses Peacock, Brown, Hughes, Ethel and Winnie Iles, Richards, and Winnie Holmes; Messrs. Orchard, F. Down, E. Down, Bale, Giddings, Shipp, and S. Tucker.

DUBLIN.—The re-opening of the latter half of the session took place in 33 Molesworth Street on 29th January, when a concert under the management of the Misses Ramsay and Wheeler was held. There was a crowded audience, and Mr. M. D. Collins, Vice-President, occupied the chair. Vocal solos were charmingly rendered by the Misses Waterfield, F. Howley, C. Collins, also by Mr. A. MacCallum and Messrs. Bryan Dardis, A. Lucas, and L. G. Banton. Miss Cavendish's violin band played several well-known items and was a very agreeable feature of the evening. Miss Ramsay was an efficient accompanist throughout. The concert was thoroughly enjoyed by all. "An Evening with *David Copperfield*" was the title of the meeting held on 12th February. Papers on the character of "Betsy Trotwood" were contributed by Mrs. E. A. Montgomery and Miss Maud Ker, while a paper dealing principally with the women characters of the book was read by Miss E. S. Heagan. A resumé of all the principal scenes and characters from the novel was given in an interesting paper by Mr. J. Miller, who in the course of his reading called attention to the democratic spirit evinced by Dickens in this novel, as shown by the comparison drawn between the two families, the Peggottys and the Steerforths, the former, though of humble origin, being high-minded and noble, and the latter, in spite of their superior station, showing a mean and base spirit in their every action. A reading of the chapter, "Barkis is willin'," was then given by Mr. M. D. Collins, and a discussion on the various papers took place, in which the following spoke:—Mrs. Montgomery, Miss Heagan, Messrs. Collins, Cavendish, H. Deakin, J. Miller.

FOREST GATE.—The "Reading Circle" meetings, at which *David Copperfield* is being studied, continue to draw satisfactory audiences. The two prizes offered for the correct answers to questions set on the first thirty chapters were won respectively by Miss Bengough and Mrs. Barr. A very successful evening was that of 6th February, when Mrs. Saunders Jacobs and her gifted daughter and sons gave us an exceptional musical treat. Miss Virginia Saunders Jacobs was really splendid, whether reciting or playing solos on the violin or piano, and her brothers also rendered excellent musical and elocutionary service. The Misses A. and M. Knight and Mrs. Edson supplied the vocal portion of the evening's entertainment, which was excellent throughout. Mr. Webb presided, Messrs. Mawer and Freeman eulogized the artistes, and Mrs. Saunders Jacobs suitably responded.

GLOUCESTER.—In lieu of the usual monthly meeting, which would have fallen on Ash Wednesday, it was decided to hold a *Conversazione and Dance* on the evening of 29th January. The event passed off most successfully. The hall at Northgate Mansions was tastefully decorated, and as each person present wore a scarlet geranium, the scene was very pretty. The first hour was devoted to music, recital, and good-fellowship, the guests numbering nearly two hundred, being received by the President and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Barnett. Dancing commenced at 9 o'clock to the strains of Rowland's band, while those who preferred cards were catered for in the usual meeting-room. The Mayor and Mayoress, both members of the Fellowship, took great interest in the function, and soon after midnight the whole company linked hands and sang "Auld Lang Syne" and the National Anthem. Miss Ethel Collett was the elocutionist.

GRAVESEND.—A Whist Drive, in aid of the funds for entertaining poor children, was held at the Masonic Hall on 22nd January. There were 145 members and friends present, and it is anticipated that the proceeds will amount to about £9. Many of the members attended in character, and the prizes for these were secured by Miss Preddy (Esther Sommerson) and Mr. Alberey (Mr. Micawber). Among other characters cleverly represented were Mr. Avenall (David Copperfield), Mr. De Wardl (Mark Tapley), Miss Gadd (Perrybingle), Miss Irene Gadd (Alsatia), and Miss Elliott (The Girl in Blue). Winners of the whist prizes were Mrs. Picken, Miss Holland, Mrs. Hayward, Mrs. Selfe, Mr. Mold, Mr. Bennett, and Mr. Lake. Dancing continued until 2-30.

HATFIELD.—The Hatfield and District Branch held its first meeting outside its headquarters on 29th January in Cobb Bros.' Room, Potter's Bar. Mr. H. W. Hope presided, and Mr. T. J. Woodrow (Chairman of the London Branch) gave a short address interspersed with readings from Dickens. The lecturer explained that the object of the Fellowship is not simply to keep alive the memory of the great novelist, but, having regard to the moral teachings contained in his writings, to do everything possible to promote the study of them with a view to the amelioration of the conditions under which the poor live and which in many respects even to-day are quite as bad as they were in the time of Charles Dickens. A very successful meeting of the Branch was held in the Parish Room, South Mymms, on 13th February in conjunction with music arranged by the Rev. Allen Hay, who presided. Mr. T. J. Woodrow gave the readings, which were much appreciated by all present. Several of the ladies contributed songs. Light refreshments were handed round during the evening.

HULL.—The Branch met at the Owen Hall on 24th January to hear the lecture on "Dickens's *Christmas Books*" given by Mr. Mortimer Petty, B.A. The President (Mr. T. H. Leahair) presided. The lecturer dealt with the five Christmas books in turn, and showed that though the "old fashioned" Christmas seems a thing of the past the spirit of Christmas still lives, and will live in spite of the disintegrating forces of modern life. Charles Dickens "invented Christmas" in a very real sense. The Dickens Birthday celebrations took the form of a Dickens Pageant and Dance, held in the Municipal Baths, Beverley Road, on Friday, 7th February, under the auspices of the Mayor and Sheriff of the city. More than a hundred members appeared in costume, and interesting dramatic episodes adapted from the works were given and highly appreciated by an enthusiastic audience of about a thousand people. The President (Mr. T. H. Leahair) had been fortunate in securing the services of Messrs. Reckitt's Morris Dancers, who rendered pleasing items between the different sketches and tableaux. After supper dancing commenced and continued till 1-30 a.m. The Celebration proved an unqualified success.

LANCASTER.—On 25th January two sketches were presented at the Storey Institute and proved a great and notable success. The first was "The Gentleman Next Door" and the second "Horatio Spokins," both of which were splendidly acted, the costumes and scenes admirable, and all the performers enthusiastically appreciated. During the evening Mr. W. Johnson and Miss N. Brown contributed songs. On 8th February Mr. E. Webster read a paper on *Oliver Twist*, which provoked a very heated discussion on Poor Law administration.

LIVERPOOL.—On 12th February, at the Royal Institution, a paper by Mr. A. E. Haynes, entitled "Dickens's Influence in Europe," was, in the absence of Mr. Haynes, read by Mr. F. A. van Gelder. Mr. Haynes gave numerous instances of his personal experiences in Scandinavia, Denmark, and Finland, the many people he had met there who took a great interest in Dickens's works, the large extent to which they were read in the schools, and quoted freely letters and criticisms which he had received from residents in these countries. Mr. van Gelder made a few remarks on the paper, mentioning some of his personal experiences abroad, and Dr. Browne concluded with some very interesting Dickensian reminiscences encountered whilst travelling in foreign countries. The second half of the evening was occupied by a most amusing sketch entitled "A Case for Eviction," which was cleverly acted by Mrs. Wade, Mrs. Helsby, and Mr. Atkinson. A vote of thanks to Mr. Haynes for his paper, and to these artistes for their sketch, proposed by Mr. Boothman and seconded by Mr. Noon, was heartily carried. The members of the Jenny Wren League celebrated the 101st anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens by giving a treat to nearly three hundred children at the Harrington Council Schools, Stanhope Street, on 7th February. A substantial hotpot, followed by cake, was much appreciated by the children, after which Mr. Cliffe delighted his audience by the amusing antics of his mannikins. The proceedings terminated with a tastefully decorated and illuminated Christmas tree, from which each child was given a doll or suitable present.

LONDON.—The President (Mr. H. F. Dickens, K.C.) gave a much appreciated recital of selections from *David Copperfield* in the hall of Clifford's Inn on the 5th February. The series consisted of four well-known chapters dealing with events associated with the story of Little Emily, and two in lighter vein. The reciter held his audience keenly interested in the introduction of Steerforth to the Yarmouth home, the discovery of the flight, the wanderings of the elder fisherman, and the wreck, the pathetic rendering of which was relieved by interpolated recitals of the Micawber-Traddles dinner-party and the wooing and winning of Dora. Mr. Warren and Mr. T. W. Hill voiced the thanks of the meeting to Mr. Dickens for the pleasant evening's entertainment he had afforded them. The hall was packed to its utmost capacity, and among those present were Mrs. H. F. Dickens, Mrs. Perugini, and other members of the Dickens family, and Sir Squire Bancroft.

MANCHESTER.—On February 7th was celebrated the birthday of Dickens by a Dickensian Entertainment for the cause of Charity, the proceeds being devoted to the Marple Home of the Crippled Children's Help Society. There was a good audience, and a splendid programme had been arranged. The President, Mr. Henry Guppy, M.A., opened the proceedings by a brief address. Then followed, at almost alternate intervals, songs and recitals, the latter being entirely from the works of Dickens. The songs rendered by Miss Rosalind Lees and Miss B. Read, were very well received, and the recitals by Mrs. Laurence Clay, Miss Clara Gillard, Mr. Richard Bagot and Mr. Fred Wilkinson, also the sketch from "Old Curiosity Shop" by Miss Ada Browning, Mr. Sheldon Bagot and Mr. Arthur Browning, delighted the audience and displayed real talent in their execution. Mrs. Kinnell and Mr. Arthur Phillips officiated at the piano. During the interval, Mr. Hargreaves,

Secretary of the Marple Home, thanked the Fellowship for their valued efforts and assistance.

NEW YORK.—This Branch was formerly the Manhattan Branch. There was a New York Branch, which dropped, and the present Branch took the name of New York and is in a very flourishing condition. Through the generosity of Mr. Paul Shotland—one of our members—this Branch has been given its own home. Mr. Shotland has presented the use of the third floor of his building at 2 East Thirtieth Street, New York, for Club-rooms. These have been furnished by gifts from members, and two meetings have been held so far. The rooms are to be open at all times for the convenience of members, and dinners and entertainments will be held there. A Library Committee (Miss Hildale, Miss Nitzkey, and Mrs. Webber) has in charge the formation of a library of Dickensiana, and loan exhibitions of valuable Dickensiana of all sorts, of which there is considerable in America. Meetings are held once a month—on or about the 7th—at which there are readings and discussions of the novels, lectures, music, etc. Refreshments are served afterward. This Branch has a particular interest in the "Tiny Tims" of life, and supports a number of beds in the Home for Crippled Children at Coney Island ("Sea Breeze") which are known as "Tiny Tim Cots."

NOTTINGHAM.—Despite inclement outdoor conditions, a loyal companionship of more than a score of members filed into the Dickens Room at the Mechanics' on the evening of 28th January, when, as a sequel to Mr. Jarvis's "G. E. Lawyers" paper of the previous fortnight, Mr. R. Ivens (of the "Daily Guardian") delivered an admirably synopsised address on "Other Characters in *Great Expectations*," which embodied numerous fine portrayals from, approximately, A to Z. To the meeting of 11th February, at which there was a goodly attendance, Mr. S. Race presented his capably-marshalled and well-balanced essay, "Dickens as a Friend," whereunto, during the second hour, much pleasant commentary and supplemental data from Messrs. Marchbanks, Derry, Ivens, Garton, Bishop, Bonnell, and others.

PHILADELPHIA.—The Annual Business Meeting of this Branch was held at the Hotel Walton on January 22nd. Vice-President Thomas K. Ober occupied the Chair. The Treasurer's report showed a balance of \$278.21. The following officers were elected—President, John M. Patterson; Vice-Presidents, Thomas K. Ober, Percival S. Woodin and Miss Sarah A. Evans; Secretary, J. K. Thompson; Treasurer, W. J. Rutter, junior; Executive Council, Charles Sessler, John C. Eckel, Miss Curtis Wager, —. Smith, John P. Coughlin and John G. Scorer. The programme opened with well-performed violin selections by Miss Elizabeth Prichard Grey. Dr. Henry Leffmann read a paper on "Das ewig Weibliche" in Dickens's novels," in which he succinctly treated the characteristics of the women in the novels. Miss Miriam Lee Earley gave two delightful readings, "Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig," and "Mr. Tappertit goes out for the Evening." A paper, "Dickens. The Great Progressive," written by W. F. McPhail, was read by Professor Wm. H. Fleming. Miss Alma Weisshaar contributed a vocal selection. On account of the birthday falling in the Lenten season this year, the event was celebrated by the usual dinner on February 4th. On account of the absence of President

Patterson in London, Vice-President Thomas K. Ober occupied the Chair as toast-master. Eighty members and guests were present. It is only possible to mention the titles of the toasts and the names of those who replied. After reviewing the work of the Branch for the past year, Mr. Ober introduced Mr. Percival S. Woodin who spoke amusingly of "The Dickensian," not this excellent monthly, but the individual of the Fellowship. Mr. John Luther Long, novelist and dramatist, had for his subject "An Apology to Dickens." He was followed by Rev. William Muir Auld, a native of Scotland, whose delightfully appreciative "Dickens: The Man and the Writer," was enthusiastically received. Mr. Joseph Morgan Rogers, musical and literary critic, though never having the good fortune to meet the great writer, gave "Personal Recollections of Dickens." Dr. Wilmer Krusen gave a charming resume of "The Dinners of Dickens," in which pathos and humour were blended, and no less entertaining than showing the speaker's thorough acquaintance with the writings of our beloved author.

PLYMOUTH.—The second half of the session was commenced on 6th January with a Social Evening. On 13th January Mr. J. Hitchings gave a paper on "Dining with Dickens" and on 17th January the Annual "Tiny Tim" Tea was held at the Guildhall, free use of which was given by the Corporation. The children had a royal time. There was plenty of everything, food, music, recitals, Punch and Judy show, Christmas trees, and toys. The 101st Anniversary of the birth of Dickens was celebrated on February 10th. The proceedings opened with a reception by the President, Mr. W. H. K. Wright. The musical part of the programme was in the capable hands of Mrs. John Hele, who contributed pianoforte solos. Songs were given by Mrs. McCluskey, Miss Irene Hambly, Mr. S. Fairman and Mr. F. L. Knight. Dickens selections were as follows:—"Bob Sawyer's Party," by Mr. W. C. Spear; "Dickens on Waiters," by Mr. John Hitchings; "A Welcome to Dickens" (American poem), by Mr. McConnell; "The Storm Scene" from *David Copperfield*, by Dr. W. H. Waterfield and the Trial of "Bardell v. Pickwick," by the President. During the interval for refreshments, the President proposed the toast, "To the Immortal Memory of Charles Dickens; Lord keep his Memory green." On February 12th, Mr. W. H. K. Wright gave a lecture to the members of the Looe Mechanics Institute, on Dickens's association with Cornwall and Devon.

SHEFFIELD.—On January 31st, Mr. C. E. Van Noorden lectured at the Cutlers' Hall on "David Copperfield and his Times." The lecturer's purpose was to show the relation between the novel and Dickens's own life. The lecturer directed attention to the many biographical details in Dickens's works, and exhibited some rare prints, sketches, drawings and other items of Dickensiana, including a letter from, and photos of the family of Mr. Lehmann, whom the great writer visited at Fieldhead House, Sheffield, in 1858, when he stayed at the King's Head Hotel. On February 7th, a dinner was given by Sheffield Dickensians to celebrate the hundred-and-first anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens. They overflowed with good fellowship, they talked Dickens, acted Dickens, and a good number of them appeared in the costumes of favourite characters. "Mr. Bumble," armed with an official staff, acted as secretary, master of ceremonies and general director. "Mr. Dombey," proposed the toast of "The

Fellowship," and among those who honoured it were, "Edith Dombey," "Mr. Blotton," a member of the Pickwick Club, "Mrs. Varden," and "Dolly Varden," "The Plump Sister," "Dick Swiveller," "Mr. Wardle," "Ben Brittain," and "Clemency Newcombe." Mr. T. W. Padmore, the first secretary of the Branch, occupied the chair, and amongst those present were the President, Mr. Samuel Smith, and other officers of the Branch including friends from Derby, London, Chesterfield, Rotherham and Lincoln. The entertainment programme was of a very pleasing character. "The Immortal Memory," and the other usual and loyal toasts were given. One of the most successful items was the rendering of a typical Micawber speech by Mr. Sidney Leed, who also introduced in his recital Uriah Heap and Daniel Peggotty. A scene from the *Battle of Life*, was presented by Miss Bradley and Mr. G. Nassau. Capital songs were given by Miss Gertrude Webster, Mr. W. F. Bagnall and Mr. T. W. Green.

SOUTHAMPTON.—A very interesting lecture, entitled "Some American Impressions in connection with Truthful Fiction," was delivered to the members on 9th February by Colonel Swalm, the American Consul, who dealt with his subject to the delight of a good audience. Showing that many great truths were brought to the minds of the people through works of cleanly fiction, he extolled the writings of Charles Dickens and expressed his admiration of his works. At the close of the address the Colonel and Mrs. Swalm were unanimously elected members of the Fellowship.

STOCKPORT.—The birthday of Dickens was celebrated on 7th February. The chair was occupied by Mr. F. Connell, J.P., who spoke of the early trials and privations of Dickens and their effect on his work. He expressed his sorrow at the death of two members, Messrs. G. R. Leah and A. Crossley, to whose families a vote of condolence was passed. A very interesting programme of music and recitals was then proceeded with, in which the following took part — Miss Ball, Mr. Marsland, Mrs. Gosling, Mrs. Parkinson, Mr. J. E. Tomlin, and Mr. Adams. The Rev. H. Twyford, in a very eloquent address, spoke of the influence for good which has resulted from the work of Dickens, and expressed his gratitude to him for his writings.

WEST LONDON.—The Monthly Meeting was held on January 29th, when readings were given from *Dombey and Son*. Mrs. Bellamy, Miss Varndall, Miss Cullum, Miss Heppel, Mr. Joscelyn and Mr. Westrope gave good extracts, in which the notable characters of the book were portrayed. On February 6th, some of the members went to Southall to give an evening at the Educational Society's invitation. The favourite scenes of "Bumble and Mrs. Corney," were played by Captain Higginson and Miss Phyllis Murrell, and "Sairey Gamp and Betsey Prig," by Miss Whitehead and Miss Annie Burrell. Mrs. Witherby read, "The Pickwickians on the Ice." Miss Hughes recited, "David and Dora." Miss Varndall, "David and the Waiter." Miss Cain played, and Miss Debae read the opening paper on Charles Dickens's life. It is hoped enthusiasm has been inspired to start a Branch. Three or four hundred were present. On February 12th, the Annual Social was held, the Lecture Hall being well filled and Mr. Stark-Browne presiding. The Dickens scenes were again given by our members, Mr. and Mrs. Morley gave a scene from "The Honey Moon," Mr. Dennett played and also kindly accompanied. Miss Gwen Harries,

Mr. Edmonds and Mr. Westrope sang. Miss Phyllis Murrell and Miss Comins gave a humorous duologue; Mr. Vingoe romanced; Miss Vingoe played the violin; Miss Varndall recited and Mrs. White gave a flute solo.

WINNIPEG.—The January Meeting was well attended by not only the members, but a number of those interested in children's work in Winnipeg, as the evening was specially devoted to "Dickens and the Children." Professor F. Allen, of the University, presided. The musical part of the programme was supplied by the Manitoba College Orchestra and the St. Andrew's Quartette. Mr. R. S. Patten, B.A., gave a reading, "The Last Words of the Old Year," and Miss Deverall gave a reading of Mrs. Wiggins's entitled "A Child's Journey with Dickens." Mr. Billiarde, Superintendent of Neglected Children, gave an account of the work accomplished in connection with neglected children, with special reference to the Juvenile Court and the Children's Aid Society. Mr. Billiarde's address was greatly appreciated by the audience, and in it he showed how the Fellowship could assist in a number of ways in connection with the neglected children of the city. Mr. Wade gave an address on a few of the aims and objects of the Fellowship. The evening's programme was concluded with a talk from Mr. Woodsworth, Superintendent of "All People's," on the work done amongst the foreign element in the north end. A hearty vote of thanks was unanimously carried for the splendid addresses of Mr. Billiarde and Mr. Woodsworth, and no doubt some of the suggestions they threw out in reference to what the Fellowship might undertake in the city will be considered.

GLASGOW DICKENS SOCIETY.—On 21st January Sheriff W. Darling Lyell delivered a lecture on "The Barristers of Dickens," with Mr. F. Harcourt Kitchin in the chair. On 9th February a special service was held in Lansdowne Church in commemoration of the birthday of Dickens. The Rev. A. Boyd Scott was the preacher. At the end of his sermon he commended to the liberality of the congregation the appeal which was being made by the Society for the endowment of a "Charles Dickens Cot" in the Sick Children's Hospital.

DICKENSIANA MONTH BY MONTH BOOKS.

My Sketches from Dickens, by Bransby Williams. London: Chapman and Hall, Ltd. 6d. net.

The Charles Dickens March (for Pianoforte) composed by Gertrude Watson, L.R.A.M., Hull, The Composer, 115, Beverley Road.

MAGAZINE AND NEWSPAPER ARTICLES.

"The Problems of 'Edwin Drood.'" By the Rev. Harold Twyford. *The Methodist United*, January 30, February 6 and 13. Reply by J. Cuming Walters, February 20.

"Written in a Library: Dickens and Longfellow." By C. W. *Bristol Times and Mirror*, January 25.

"Teddy and Edwin." *Punch*, February 5.

"Fieldhead House: Where Dickens visited Mrs. Wells." *Sheffield Daily Telegraph*, (Illustrated), February 7.

"Boz Club." *Daily Telegraph*, February 8.

"Charles Dickens and Sam Weller." By "A Man of Kent." *British Weekly*, February 13.

"Richard II and Harold Skimpole." *The Times*, February 13.

DIARY OF DICKENS MEETINGS

MARCH

1. Brighton : Evening by the President, Alderman E. Geere, at Steine House.
2. Swadlincote : Reading.
3. Stockport : "Rambles in Dickensland," by Mr. W. Hatfield, in Sunday School, at 8.
4. Glasgow : Lecture-Recital, *David Copperfield*, by Mr. Percival Steeds, at the Masonic Hall.
5. London : Lecture, "From Fairy Queen to Little Nell," by Mr. G. W. Davis, at Clifford's Inn Hall, at 8.
Gloucester : Monthly Meeting.
6. Edinburgh : "Charles Dickens as a lover of Animals," by Miss Helena Sharp, at 5 St. Andrew's Square, at 8.
Forest Gate : Members' Night, at Earlham Hall.
7. Manchester : Discussion on *Edwin Drood*. Opener, Mr. J. Cuming Walters.
Hull : "Study of Child Phenomena," by Miss B. Pollard, at Owen Hall, at 8.
Southampton : Lantern Address by Mr. A. C. Hallett.
10. Brixton : Evening arranged by Mr. F. T. Harry, in Lecture Hall, Independent Church, at 8.
Plymouth : Members' Evening, arranged by Mr. W. Jenkin.
11. Nottingham : "David Copperfield and his Child Wife," by Miss Ida Greaves, at Mechanics' Institute, at 8.
12. Liverpool : "Oliver Wendell Holmes," by Mrs. F. E. L. Nield, at Royal Institution, at 8.
West London : Miscellaneous Readings by Members, at Ealing Town Hall, at 8.
Sheffield : Recital by Mr. William Miles in Montgomery Hall, at 8.
13. Winnipeg : Social Evening at 8.
Sheffield : Dramatic Sketches from Dickens, at Cutlers' Hall, at 8.
14. Birmingham : "The Associations of Charles Dickens with the Midland Institute," by Mr. Alfred Hayes, M.D., at Great Western Hotel, at 7-30.
16. Swadlincote : Meeting.
17. Brixton : Social Evening at Hammerton Hall.
Plymouth : "Dickens's Children," by Mr. R. E. Pengelly.
20. Edinburgh : "The Strollers' Company : Hard Times," by Miss J. L. Dagleish, at 5 St. Andrew's Square, at 8.
21. Toronto : Dramatic Scenes from Dickens, by the Company of Players.
25. Nottingham : "Selections from *A Tale of Two Cities*," by Miss Edith M. Hall, at Mechanics' Institute, at 8.
26. Forest Gate : Reading Circle at Earlham Hall.
Swadlincote : Social Evening.
Bristol : "The Life History of Richard Swiveller," by Mr. A. J. Tonkin.
28. Hull : Evening of Music and Recitals by Miss Gertrude Watson, L.R.A.M., at Owen Hall.
31. Plymouth : Evening arranged by Mr. C. E. Kemp.



MONRO S. ORR

SAMPSON BRASS.

Drawn for *The Dickensian* by Monro S. Orr.

"An attorney of no very good repute from Bevis Marks in the City of London; he was a tall, meagre man, with a nose like a wen a protruding forehead, retreating eyes, and hair of deep red. He wore a long black surtout reaching nearly to his ankles. . . . He had a cringing manner but a very harsh voice, and his blandest smiles were so extremely forbidding, that to have had his company under the least repulsive circumstances, one would have wished him to be out of temper that he might only scowl." *The Old Curiosity Shop*, chapter ii.